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REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment is proper because it does not raise any new issues requiring further search by the Examiner, narrows the issues on appeal, and is believed to place the present application in condition for immediate allowance.

Claims 7, 8, 24-33, and 36-47 are all the claims presently pending in the application.

Claim 33 is amended merely to correct a minor grammatical error.

While Applicant believes that all of the claims are patentable over the cited references, to speed prosecution, claims 8 and 25 are rewritten in independent form and claims 6 and 23 correspondingly are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 7, 24, 26, and 28 are amended merely to change their dependency from claims 6 and 23 to claims 8 and 25, respectively. Claim 36 also is amended to recite somewhat similar features as claim 8.

No further search should be necessary to consider the above amendments, since the features of the dependent claims have already been searched and considered. No new matter is added.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicants specifically state that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 6-8, 23-33, and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egger et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,571; hereinafter "Egger") in view of Anupam et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,991,796; hereinafter "Anupam").

These rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

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I. RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

The Examiner alleges that newly submitted claims 37-47 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed because: "selectively notifying said second user of said closeness of said research being performed by said first user based on said determined coordinates of said pages which are retrieved by said first user."

The Examiner asserts that the originally presented invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits, and that claims 37-47 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Applicant respectfully submits, however, that the Examiner has not properly identified the class and subclass of newly added claims 37-47, which resulted in the Examiner concluding that claims 37-47 have a different classification from the original claims. Thus, Applicant cannot properly respond to the Restriction Requirement. Accordingly, Applicant reserves the right to traverse this restriction requirement upon the proper identification of the classification of claims 37-47.

II. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention is directed to a collaborative Web research method.

In an illustrative, non-limiting embodiment of the invention, as defined by independent claim 6, a Web-based collaborative research method includes determining coordinates for pages which are retrieved by a first user and mapping the coordinates into a space, and based on the coordinates of the pages, informing a second user of a closeness of a research by the first user.

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In another exemplary embodiment of the invention, as defined by independent claim 23, a Web-based collaborative research system includes a unit for determining coordinates for pages which are retrieved by a first user and mapping the coordinates into a space, and a notifier for informing, based on the coordinates of the pages, a second user of a closeness of a research by the first user.

Claim 36 recites somewhat similar embodiments of the invention, but is directed to a signal-bearing medium tangibly embodying a program of recordable, machine-readable instructions executable by a digital processing apparatus to perform a Web-based collaborative research method.

In the spatial navigation model according to the claimed invention, the data blocks (Web pages, pictures and so forth) are indexed such that each data block resides in a specific point in a N-dimensional coordinate system. The placement of the data blocks in this coordinate system is performed such that data blocks which are relatively "close" to each other are related to the same subjects (e.g., see specification at page 14, lines 15-20).

Moreover, the claimed invention provides a World Wide Web Portal which is capable of correlating the usage habits of each human researcher and is capable of notifying a researcher of a given topic that other researchers are currently working in related topics. This facility can be used by researchers to find potential collaborators for a research task, and can be used in knowledge management applications at research institutions (e.g., see specification at page 11, lines 18-23).

With the claimed invention, researchers can engage in efficient collaborative research. Further, the portal of the invention can correlate the usage habits of each human researcher and can automatically (or otherwise) notify a researcher of a given topic that other researchers are

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currently working in related topics (e.g., "close" topics) (e.g., see specification at page 12, lines 1-5).

III. THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 6-8, 23-33, and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egger in view of Anupam. Applicant traverses this rejection for the following reasons.

While Applicant believes that all of the claims are patentable over the cited references, to speed prosecution, claims 8 and 25 are rewritten in independent form and claims 6 and 23 correspondingly are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 7, 24, 26, and 28 are amended merely to change their dependency from claims 6 and 23 to claims 8 and 25, respectively. Claim 36 also is amended to recite somewhat similar features as claim 8.

In the Response to Arguments of the present Office Action, the Examiner states that Applicant's arguments have been considered but that they are not persuasive. The Examiner maintains that Egger teaches determining coordinates for pages (algorithm is used to determine coordinates, col. 5, lines 38-55; col. 6, lines 15-25) which are retrieved by a first user and mapping the coordinates into a space (see discussion of building with n-dimensional vector space for representing data including textual objects, col. 6, lines 6-50; col. 16, lines 12-35; col. 16-18).

The Examiner also alleges that Egger teaches based on said coordinates of said pages, closeness of a research (see discussion of calculating proximity matrix, col. 18, line 32; col. 48, line 19). On the other hand, the Examiner alleges that Anupam discloses informing a second user by first user (surrogate, 153,173, fig 1, col. 1, lines 66-67 and col. 2, lines 1-8).

Therefore, the Examiner alleges that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to combine the teaching of Egger with Anupam because

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Anupam's use of creating surrogate for the user and inter surrogate communication would provide Egger's system user friendly computerized, web enabled, and an intelligent research tool that emulates human methods of research. With respect to the suggestion to combine the references, the Examiner alleges that, in this case, Egger teaches building a system with n-dimensional vector space for representing data including text objects, indexes data based using proximity matrix, searches data, and graphically displays searches with two or three dimensional spatial orientation of data (see discussion, col. 5, line 38; col. 6, line 6; col. 16-18).

The Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to combine the teachings of Egger with Anupam because Anupam's use of creating surrogate for the user and inter surrogate communication would provide Eggers' system user friendly computerized, web enabled, and an intelligent research tool that emulates human methods of research.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's position, and therefore, traverses this rejection.

To summarize, Applicant respectfully reiterates that it would not have been obvious to modify Egger based on Anupam to arrive at the claimed invention. Applicant also submits that, even assuming *arguendo* that it would have been obvious to combine these references, the resulting combination would not arrive at the claimed invention.

For example, independent claim 8 recites a Web-based collaborative research method, including:

determining coordinates for pages which are retrieved by a first user and mapping the coordinates into a space; and based on said coordinates of said pages, informing a second user of a closeness of a research by said first user.

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wherein an intersection of research by said first and second users is graphically displayed to said first and second users
(emphasis added).

The claimed invention provides a Web based collaborative research method which informs a second user of a closeness of a research by a first user to the research of the second user. That is, in stark contrast to the cited references, the present invention does not merely notify another researcher of *changes* of a uniform resource locator (URL) of a user, as disclosed by Anupam. Instead, the claimed Web-based collaborative research method notifies the second user of a "closeness" of the first user's research to the second user's research.

This feature clearly is not disclosed or suggested by Egger and Anupam, either individually or in combination.

In other words, the claimed invention is capable of correlating the usage habits of each human researcher and is capable of notifying a researcher of a given topic that other researchers are currently working, or have worked on, in related topics.

An important feature of the present invention is that the present invention notifies the first user and second user of the closeness of their research to each other's research by graphically displaying an intersection of research by the first and second users to the first and second users, as claimed.

This facility can be used by researchers to find potential collaborators for a research task, and can be used in knowledge management applications at research institutions (e.g., see specification at page 11, lines 18-23). Moreover, with the claimed invention, researchers can engage in efficient collaborative research. Further, the portal of the invention can correlate the usage habits of each human researcher and can automatically (or otherwise) notify a researcher

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of a given topic that other researchers are currently working in related topics (e.g., see specification at page 12, lines 1-5).

In comparison, Eggers' merely teaches a graphic user interface which shows a single researcher the proximity of the research to possible relevant objects.

On the other hand, Anupam merely discloses a collaborative browsing session (e.g., see Anupam at Abstract). That is, Anupam merely permits the users to follow the browsing of other users. Anupam is silent with respect to a determination of the closeness of the research, or for that matter, the research of one user to another user's research.

Particularly, Anupam discloses that, when one of the surrogates detects a change by a collaborator of a uniform resource locator (URL), the new URL is communicated through controllers to the surrogates of all other collaborators in the session. Thus, the collaborators are able to move from one URL to another to browse information in a synchronous manner (e.g., see Anupam at Abstract; see also column 2, lines 36-39; and column 4, lines 29-32).

However, Applicant respectfully submits that merely informing the collaborators of a change from one URL to another to permit the collaborators to browse information in a synchronous manner clearly is different than the affirmative step recited in the claimed invention in which "*an intersection of research by said first and second users is graphically displayed to said first and second users*", as recited in claim 8.

Moreover, Applicant submits that merely informing the collaborators of a change from one URL to another to permit the collaborators to browse information in a synchronous manner would not reasonably have motivated the ordinarily skilled artisan to modify Egger to show the closeness of the two user's research to each other, instead of to possible relevant objects, as disclosed by Eggers.

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For the foregoing reasons, neither Egger nor Anupam, either individually or in combination, discloses or suggests "*an intersection of research by said first and second users is graphically displayed to said first and second users*", as recited in independent claim 8.

Moreover, even assuming *arguendo* that it would have been obvious to combine Egger and Anupam, Applicant submits that the resulting combination clearly would not arrive at the claimed invention recited, for example, in independent claim 8.

Thus, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that it would not have been obvious to combine Egger and Anupam to arrive at the claimed invention, and even if combined, the resulting combination clearly would not disclose or suggest the claimed invention.

Applicant submits that independent claims 25 and 36 also are patentable over the alleged combination of Egger and Anupam for somewhat similar reasons as independent claim 8.

Accordingly, the Examiner respectfully is requested to withdraw this rejection and permit claims 7, 8, 24-33, and 36 to pass to immediate allowance.

IV. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 7, 8, 24-33, and 36-47, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Assignee's Deposit Account No. 50-0510.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: APRIL 21, 2006

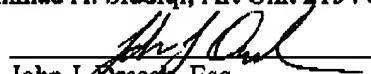

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I certify that I transmitted via facsimile to (571) 273-8300 the enclosed Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 to Examiner Mohammad A. Siddiqi, Art Unit 2154 on April 21, 2006.


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